

When Senator Nickles finished his term as majority whip, I was thrilled that Katie agreed to join me as my first deputy staff director of the Republican policy committee. In that capacity, she quickly became my eyes and ears here in the Capitol Building, tracking the ins and outs of floor activity, representing the RPC within the leadership, and doing everything she could to ensure that only the best policy—good, conservative Republican policy—became law. As one of her many duties, you may recall that she developed our RPC “getaway” materials and stood over by the side door to my right and handed them to Republican Senators after the last vote of the week.

Katie quickly earned my trust, as I know she had earned the trust of Senator Nickles before me. So it was an easy decision to promote Katie to staff director of the RPC in June 2006. She had experience in a broad range of policy areas and she understood the pulse of this body better than most ever will. My staff has enormous respect for her, and she is a natural leader.

Katie's departure coincides with the end of my 4 years chairing the Senate Republican policy committee, a job I have enjoyed immensely. I want to thank Katie for the consistently good work product she helped us achieve during these past 4 years. She has inspired other staff members of the committee to achieve a level of excellence that, I believe, has been of great value to Senators and their staffers. My goal, since day one, was to make sure we produced a first-rate product—thorough, accurate, and reliable. Katie understood this, and she made sure it happened. And so we both depart the policy committee—I for the chairmanship of the Republican Conference and she for the Oklahoma State House—I believe we have left it well-prepared and well-armed for the future.

Let me share a few words about Katie personally. We all know Katie to be bright, quick-witted, fiercely loyal, and genuinely warm to those around her. She is a true patriot who cares deeply for this Nation and the Senate, and I know she is proud to have served here for the past 9½ years. She loves and reveres this institution, even its eccentricities. For example, a former colleague of hers remembers fondly how irritated Katie can become when the decorum of the Senate is offended, even when it is a Senator who fails to take seriously the Senate Chamber's dress code.

When contacted a few days ago, Katie's former boss, Senator Don Nickles, had this to say about her: “Katie brought a great deal of professionalism and enthusiasm into both the Whip office and Policy Committee. She will certainly be missed.”

Eric Ueland, now chief of staff to Majority Leader FRIST, worked with Katie for several years in the Nickles whip office. He said: “No one should ever mistake Katie's grace and charm for

indifference to conservative philosophy or Republican ideology, because within her beats the heart of a lion and the ferocity of a tiger. Katie always harnesses the very best from her colleagues to bring creative solutions to bear. She always seeks to suggest the best way forward to do credit not just to the Senators she serves, but to the values that brought them to Washington.”

One more accolade. Dave Schiappa, the secretary for the majority, who handles all floor operations for the Republicans and who has worked with Katie for many years, had this to say: “Over my 22 years, I have had the privilege to work with a great number of intelligent and dedicated people. Katie Altshuler is one of those shining stars and has set a standard of professionalism and devotion to the Senate as an institution.”

I wish Katie could be convinced to stay and help us in the Senate, but I know that the pull of home and of new challenges is a strong one, and I wish her well in her new endeavors. So, Katie, my best wishes to you as you take up your new line of duty, and on behalf of the Senate, I commend you for your excellent work. Thank you.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

100TH BIRTHDAY OF CLAUDE WOOD

• Mr. BINGAMAN. Mr. President, earlier this week, Claude Wood celebrated his centennial. His name is familiar to several long-serving Members of this body, for he was the chief of staff to one of the Senate's giants, Clinton Anderson of New Mexico. For all of Senator Anderson's career in this Chamber, Claude was at his right hand.

A native New Mexican, he served our State, our Nation, and the Senate with distinction and honor. He retains an active interest in what we do here and is a great friend of the Senate Historian, Richard Baker. I myself have known Claude for many years and am very glad to have this opportunity to send him best wishes on this milestone birthday.●

IN MEMORIAM: BEBE MOORE CAMPBELL

• Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, today I offer a few words in observance of the passing of novelist Bebe Moore Campbell, a most influential American writer and a leading advocate for people living with mental illness.

I extend my deepest sympathy and most sincere condolences to Ms. Campbell's family, especially her husband, Ellis Gordon, Jr.; her mother, Doris Moore; and her daughter and stepson, Maia and Ellis Gordon III. My thoughts and prayers go out to them as they struggle with the death of a woman they loved dearly.

In an illustrious career spanning 20 years, Bebe Moore Campbell was an ex-

traordinarily perceptive author who tirelessly explored the American experience through a variety of perspectives. Growing up in both the North and the South in the 1950s and 1960s, she experienced first hand the numerous ways in which fear and hatred are manifested in the form of racial segregation and oppression. She learned about living amid injustice, about the rage and sorrow it imparts, and about the dignity and resolve required to overcome it.

Ms. Campbell drew much of her inspiration and strength from the strong bond she had with her parents. Her second book, “Sweet Summer: Growing Up With and Without My Dad,” is a loving tribute to the warmth of extended family and friends, the strong women in her life who helped mold her character, and the heroic example of her father, whose perseverance after a car accident left him a paraplegic taught her courage and independence. The importance of family dynamics would be a guiding theme in Ms. Campbell's work and stimulated her interest in the intricate nature of relationships.

As Ms. Campbell continued to explore the parent-child relationship, she also delved into the complexities that exist between and within genders, races, and communities. She produced two critically acclaimed novels in the first half of the 1990s set against the backdrop of historical instances of racial violence: “Your Blues Ain't Like Mine” and “Brothers and Sisters.”

In these novels, Ms. Campbell explored the issues of race, class, and gender and personalized them in the form of characters we related to and cared for. Courageous and exceptionally talented, she captured the social and historical forces that cut through out society and divide us. She graphically demonstrated how America's racial, economic, and gender fault lines cut through the lives of individuals, often forcing people into difficult and painful conflicts with others as well as themselves.

Ms. Campbell focused in her later writings on the issue of mental illness. With passion and emotional depth, she explored the horrible consequences of mental illness and the strain that it places on those who love and depend on people suffering from a mental condition. Her work has helped to raise our Nation's consciousness about the issue and has made an invaluable contribution to our society's efforts to improve the lives of people living with mental illness. Ms. Campbell was a founding member of the Inglewood branch of the National Alliance for the Mentally Ill, and her children's book “Sometimes My Mother Gets Angry” won that organization's Outstanding Literature Award for 2003.

In her work, Ms. Campbell illustrated how oppression and injustice dehumanizes everyone involved. She challenged and inspired us to examine our preconceptions and fears and to open our hearts and minds to those around us.